HENRY C. HURT, JR.
CHATHAM, VIRGINIA 24531

May 13, 1986

Mr. Johann Rush
Reporter
WDAM-TV
P.O. Box 16269
Hattiesburg, Mississippi 39404

Dear Mr. Rush:

Your letter dated May 7th, postmarked May 9th, contains interesting revelations about your professional character. In refusing to send me what you have publicly broadcast about my book, you have skilfully succeeded in depriving me of any chance to engage in the interview you so grandly "proposed" a few weeks ago. Let's look at the record, starting with your most recent letter, postmarked May 9th:

1) Not surprisingly, you reveal yourself to be among those who secretly record telephone conversations, if that is what the "transcript" you refer to of our April 15th conversation is based on. As you surely know, nearly every legitimate news organization views this practice as an ethical abomination. When one reporter does it to another, as in this case, it certainly signifies bad faith. Nonetheless, I wish you would send me a copy of that transcript--or the secret tape recording itself--for it was my impression that you were agreeable to sending me the publicly-broadcast material I requested. Inasmuch as I did not secretly tape your telephone call, I am not able to clarify the point. My request was so routine that it is possible I misunderstood you. I do know that if you had clearly stated your refusal to send me the broadcasts, I would have ceased communications with you at that point.

2) Your denial at this late point that you ever indicated you would send the publicly-aired material is fatuous. You are conveniently overlooking the fact that on four occasions--April 18th, April 24th, May 3rd, May 5th (all attached)--I sent you and your general manager letters reminding you that I <u>still</u> had not received the material. I was naive enough to believe you were acting in good faith, and anyone can discern from the tone of my letters that I was anxious to consider your request for an interview. It is hard to imagine any good reason why it took you until May 9th to mail me a letter stating your refusal to send the material. This sequence strongly suggests that you are seeking any possible avenue to avoid the interview while appearing to offer it. That sort of duplicity fools no one.

TELEPHONE: 804-432-1400

3) You have proposed that I journey by train to Hattiesburg--a 36-hour round-trip. Now that you have at long last expressed your refusal to send me your earlier broadcasts, I must conclude that you are ashamed of whatever it is you have aired about Reasonable Doubt. If not that, then you are afraid to send it to me for fear I will view your presumed distortions as so irresponsible that I will not embark upon a 36-hour train ride in order to respond. If you are this ashamed of your work, then I suspect I would find it even more irresponsible than you apparently fear that it is.

4) Your refusal to send me what you have broadcast about this book is the epitome of journalistic shoddiness. This is the first time in my career that I have had first-hand experience with a reporter who is afraid to allow the subject of his material (me) to review it after public broadcast or publication. Your position is so preposterous that it defies every journalistic standard of fairness, not to mention common sense.

5) My position remains the same. Once I have received and reviewed the material you have already broadcast, I will then decide whether to grant your request for an interview. Thus far, after 75 radio and television interviews about this book, I have never turned down a request for a live interview. If you are legitimate, why won't you send me the public broadcasts? What are you afraid of? Your continued refusal to send me this public material signifies your determination to ensure that I do not have an opportunity to engage in the interview you so grandly "proposed." As well as being grossly unprofessional and unfair to me, such a contrivance on your part is a grave disservice to your audience.

Sincerely yours,

Henry Hurt.

Henry Hurt.

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